

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 65
By Godsey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mrs. Grace Elrod Riden.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs. Grace Elrod Riden, who was an inspiration to teachers across this State; and

WHEREAS, born in Etowah and raised in McMinn County, Mrs. Riden worked in a multitude of jobs—keeping the books and painting automobiles at her husband's body shop and working for a florist, to name a few—before enrolling at Hiwassee College in 1968; and

WHEREAS, while her three boys were in school, Mrs. Riden became very actively involved with the Parent Teacher Association in Blount County and was soon made a state officer, overseeing the P.T.A. in thirty-four schools; to honor her many valuable contributions to the P.T.A., Mrs. Riden was made a lifetime member of the organization; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1978 with a degree in Home Economics, Grace Riden went on to become a highly acclaimed teacher for several years at Madisonville Junior High School; remarkably, Mrs. Riden was already fifty-six years old and a great-grandmother when she graduated from college; and

WHEREAS, after just six years of teaching, Grace Riden was named the first-ever East Tennessee recipient of the Conservation Teacher of the Year Award from the State of

Tennessee for her creativity and hard work in helping her students design and build an outdoor classroom; and

WHEREAS, an extraordinary study of environmental geology at work in the world, the outdoor classroom was featured in a documentary on television; and

WHEREAS, although devoted to education, Mrs. Riden took a much-deserved retirement from teaching in 1984 and moved to Blount County where she was a substitute teacher for six years; and

WHEREAS, using the materials of her late husband's home place, she would later transform her home in McMinn County into a showcase that houses the treasures of a lifetime and memories of several generations of her family; and

WHEREAS, from 1943-1967, Grace Riden was an active and devout member of the First Methodist Church in Maryville, which she served faithfully for many years as a member, Spiritual Life Secretary, and Sunday School Teacher; she later joined the Jones Chapel United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Grace Riden was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Grace Riden enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband, the Reverend William Walter Riden, for many years until his passing in 1994, and was the proud mother of Donnie, Jimmie, and David; she also had ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, along with several nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, stalwartly devoted to making a lasting difference in the lives of her students, fellow teachers, and family, and always motivating them to attain excellence, Grace Riden brought the same spirit and enthusiasm to every project she undertook, throwing herself heart, body, and soul into each of her endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Grace Riden leaves behind an indelible legacy of caring and professionalism in her work as a teacher, and a compassion and diligence in her personal affairs that will be sorely missed; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional and multitalented teacher and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we honor the memory of Mrs. Grace Elrod Riden, reflecting fondly upon the meritorious example she set for teachers throughout the State and her devotion to family and community life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Grace Riden.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.